

COUNTRY LABOR DIALOGUE

CONNECTING COUNTRY COMMUNITIES – JANUARY 2017

Another successful Country Conference

The 2016 Country Labor Conference in Dubbo was a huge success with hundreds of members and delegates in attendance.



NSW Opposition Leader Luke Foley addressing Country Conference.

The three-day conference commenced with a half-day Country Campaign Insight, where Country Labor members and activists learned about the campaign strategies used to deliver great results in the last Federal election. The training included instruction on modern campaigning, direct voter contact, electoral laws, and how to use social media to build branches in the regions.

State Opposition Leader Luke Foley spoke to conference on the morning of the Saturday, reaffirming State Labor's commitment to regional NSW and announcing new policies about saving Koala populations on the North Coast and horse breeding in the Hunter Valley.

The conference was also addressed by Unions NSW Secretary Mark Morey and NSW Labor General Secretary Kaila Murnain.

The afternoon of conference was devoted to workshops that developed policy on areas like Education, Regional Jobs, and Local Government. The attendees were addressed by subject matter experts and had an opportunity to formulate and propose reforms.

On Sunday, Federal frontbencher Anthony Albanese gave a rousing address to conference on the failings of the National Party and the responsibility of the Labor Party to take up the fight in the regions.

Jay Suvaal writes...

Thanks to everyone who attended Country Labor Conference 2016. There were many excellent contributions of policy ideas and engaging debate, and the weekend was highly enjoyable.



With the resignation of Mike Baird, both the Liberal Party and National Party have swapped out disgraced leaders for newer models. But their policies of cuts and privatisation have stayed the same, and are still hurting rural and regional New South Wales. Country Labor remains committed to defeating them.

We're preparing for an exciting and eventful 2017, with Council elections in amalgamated areas a priority for many members across the state and a rigorous schedule of training events planned.

Please contact me on jay@nswlabor.org.au or **1800 503 035** if there is anything I can help you with.

Jay Suvaal
COUNTRY ORGANISER

COUNTRY CONFERENCE 2016



Anthony Albanese addresses Conference.



Delegates eat onions at Sam Dastyari's Trivia Night.



Kaila Murnain at Campaign Insight on Friday.



Delegates protest job cuts in Western NSW.



Policy being discussed at the Regional Development and Jobs workshop.



Luke Foley with Country Labor Chair Bryce Wilson.

C O U N T R Y C O N F E R E N C E 2 0 1 6



Stephen Jones with delegates protesting job cuts in Western NSW.



2016 Bluey Rodwell winner Fred McNerney with previous recipients Shorty Reville and Mick O'Shea.



Pat and Kaila with Indigenous elder Diane McNaboe.



Delegates protest job cuts in Western NSW.



Delegates fighting hospital privatisation.



Luke Foley addresses delegates at the rally.

Vale Jeff Condron

Country Labor stalwart Jeff Condron passed away in January this year after many years holding branch positions in Port Macquarie. Jeff was instrumental in establishing and staffing a Country Labor Information Office in Port Macquarie, often making representations on local issues to Senators and Duty MLCs.

WITH PERMISSION, BELOW IS AN EXCERPT OF SENATOR SAM DASTYARI'S EULOGY.

At the end of it, when it is all said and done, how do you speak of a man like Jeff?

The titles were meaningless to him. I could tell you he achieved Labor's highest honours; Life membership, the Bluey Rodwell award, the McKell award. That if there was an honour to bestow on him we would.

But that would make Jeff look like he was after prestige. And he wasn't. He was proud of his work in the party, sure. But he wasn't a man for accolades.

I could tell you he led numerous Labor campaigns. That he ran for Parliament in 1971 ... 46 years ago! But I wouldn't want to think that he was a careerist. Jeff was not that.

I could tell you of his years of work in the community and the church. The roles, the experiences, the events he organised. And that would start getting us closer to the truth. That if you wanted to get something done, you would turn to Jeff and he would make it happen. If I told you that, we are almost starting to get there.

But what if I told you this.

A woman comes to see Jeff. She is desperate, lonely, without anyone to turn to. She comes to see Jeff because she has nowhere left to turn. Her literacy is poor and she is being turfed out onto the street.

She comes to him because she needs help and he will help her. He will sit and let her talk. Give her the time that no one else would. Hear what she has to say and understand that under the frustration, this anger, there is a person in pain. He will let her cry and when that is finished, he

will make her laugh.

He will call that young brash fool who thought he could take him on, now that he is a Senator, and ask him to help her with her problem. He will keep calling daily to make sure it is done. Then when he thinks more can be done that isn't, he will call more than once a day.

He will do all of this, not for the accolades, not for the titles, not for the politics, not for prestige, but he will do all of this because he can.

If I told you that. We would be getting closer to the mark of the man.



Do you have a story or a photo for Country Labor Dialogue?

Email your story and photos to jay@nswlabor.org.au